



# HealthyPeople • Dental

## HEALTHY DENTAL TIPS FOR SUMMER SMILES

School may be out for summer, but your child's best teacher is working year-round: You! Leading by example — especially when it comes to establishing healthy habits like brushing, cleaning between your teeth and seeing your dentist — can make a big difference in the health and happiness of your entire family.

### KNOW THE LIMITS

When choosing a snack, watch for added sugar (sweeteners like corn syrup or white sugar that are added to prepared foods). The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommends that people age 3 and older should consume no more than 12.5 tsp. each day of added sugar. (The same as one can of soda.) The World Health Organization states that adults should consume no more than 6 tsp. of added sugar, and children should have no more than 3 tsp. When reading labels, you'll see sugar is listed in grams. Since 1 tsp. of sugar equals 4 grams, aim to make sure the foods you are feeding your child fall between 12 to 50 grams a day.



## MORE TIPS FOR HEALTHY TEETH AND GUMS

### SERVE CARBS WITH CARE

Whether it's the crunch or the fact that they're shaped like their favorite animals, kids love crackers and chips. The truth? Many crackers are cookies with salt.

### SKIP THE SODA

Call it soda, call it pop. But sugary, carbonated beverages by any name are bad news for your child's teeth. One can of soda is the amount of sugar recommended for three days for a child.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT JUICE

Because juice is high in sugar and calories, water and milk are always the best options for your little one. In fact, if your child is under 1 years old, the American Academy of Pediatrics suggests completely removing juice from his or her diet.

Allowing your child to sip on juice throughout the day puts him or her at higher risk for tooth decay because you're

giving that cavity-causing bacteria more opportunities to eat and produce the acid that eats away at teeth.

### BE PICKY ABOUT STICKY SNACKS

If you've been under the impression that gummy or sticky fruit snacks are healthy alternatives, you're not alone. Many parents are surprised to learn they are really closer to candy than fruit, especially when it comes to sugar. These items are like candy, but in some respect it's worse than candy because it sticks to teeth longer than things like milk chocolate, which is easier to wash away.

### SET AN EXAMPLE

You'd do anything for your kids. Now, are you ready to do all of the above for yourself too? Setting an example can make a big difference in your whole family's health. Eat well, brush twice a day for two minutes, and clean between your teeth once a day.

Source: [www.healthymouth.org](http://www.healthymouth.org)